
**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE
NEWS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20230**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 13, 2006
Website: www.mbda.gov
Website: www.medweek.gov

Contact: Tambra Stevenson
(202) 482-6274 (work)
Email: tstevenson@mbda.gov

Native American-Owned Construction Firm Receives National Minority Business Award

Oklahoma-Born Business Honored by MBDA at its 24th National Minority Enterprise Development Week Awards Gala in Washington, DC

WASHINGTON—The Minority Business Development Agency's National Director Ronald N. Langston today recognized Flintco Companies, Inc. as the 2006 National Minority Construction Firm of the Year award winner during the 24th National Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week conference in Washington, D.C.

"The MBDA Entrepreneur of the Year award honors entrepreneurs whose ingenuity, hard work and perseverance have created and sustained successful, growing business ventures," said National MBDA Director Ronald N. Langston. "Ms. Ballenger along with the remaining MBDA national winners truly exemplifies what it means to be a successful entrepreneur who has created wealth and jobs for building and sustaining economy and the community."

With roots in the oil industry like most Oklahoma-based companies, origins of Flintco grew from the establishment of the Tulsa Rig and Reel Manufacturing Co. (TRR) when CW Flint, Sr. joined TRR in 1911 and by 1919 co-owned the company. Establishing lumberyards in the oil fields, TRR purchased Fornier Construction Company in 1936 in expanding into general building contracting.

"It is a special honor for Flintco to receive this award," said Ms. Robin Ballenger, chairperson of Flintco. "The encouragement that this award gave to other Native business owners present was most gratifying to me. Of course, Flintco has the advantage of longevity---we have been in business nearly 100 years, but I'd like to think that we stand as a symbol of encouragement to other, newer Native-owned firms."

Ballenger assumed Chairperson of the Board in 2001 of the privately owned family company when CW "Bill" Flint, Jr. who passed away and had membership in the Cherokee Nation played a key role in the company's future. In 1972, Bill Flint consolidated TRR and Fornier under a new name—Flintco, Inc.

-more-

Headquartered in Tulsa, OK, the Flintco Companies, Inc. rank as the largest American Indian-owned construction company in the world and one of the largest commercial contractors in the nation. Providing a full range of construction services, Flintco worked on projects in 30 different states and in varied industries from healthcare, education, corrections, nonprofit, hospitality, governmental to sports. The company has grown steadily from \$50 million in annual revenues and one office to this year in excess of \$700 million in revenues with nine offices.

As Ms. Ballenger has noted, "To whom much is given, much is expected." This statement has set the tone at Flintco for giving back to the community. Community participation is one of the four core values of the company's strategic plan. As a strong community citizen, Flintco contributes to many Native organizations such as the North American Indigenous Games and Native Nations Institute at the University of Arizona.

Ballenger one of 7 Outstanding National Minority Entrepreneurs of the Year award winners award winners recognized at this year's 24th Annual National MED Week Awards Gala held on September 1st at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC. Actor/producer Tim Reid, best known in "*WKRP in Cincinnati*" and his actress wife, Daphne, best known as "Vivian" in the hit show "*Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*" with Will Smith emceed the event. Award winners, their guests and over 1000 conference attendees also enjoyed musical selections by the Morgan State University Choir and the Pan American Symphony Orchestra.

MED Week, established by Presidential Proclamation each year since 1983, recognizes the role that minority entrepreneurs play in building the American economy through the creation of jobs, products and services, in addition to supporting their local communities. The National MED Week Conference is MBDA's signature event for the minority business enterprise community including the private, non-profit and government sectors. The conference promotes and celebrates the vital role minority businesses play in generating wealth, creating jobs and strengthening our nation's economy. It also serves as a forum to discuss the issues, trends and strategies affecting minority-owned business enterprises. This year's theme, *Minority Business Enterprises: Mastering the Supply Chain*, emphasizes how new market realities require minority businesses to strategically position their businesses in domestic and global supply chains.

Conference speakers include U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez, U.S. Labor Secretary Elaine L. Chao, SBA Administrator Steven Preston, GSA Administrator Lurita Doan, and Dr. Matthew Slaughter of the President's Council of Economic Advisors. Premium sponsors of the 2006 Conference include BAE Systems, IBM, Chevron, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon company, VISA, FedEx and GVCwinstar. With over 1,000 attendees, the National MED Week features a White House breakfast series, networking events, industry-driven workshops, State of Commerce luncheon, business expo, and an awards gala.

-30-

About the Minority Business Development Agency, US Department of Commerce

Founded in 1971 and headquartered in Washington, DC, the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) is part of the U.S. Department of Commerce. MBDA is the only federal agency created specifically to foster the establishment and growth of minority-owned businesses in this Nation. The Agency actively promotes the growth and competitiveness of large, medium and small minority business enterprises by offering management and technical assistance through a network of forty local business centers throughout the United States. Statistics on minority businesses and resources to build and sustain minority businesses are available at www.mbda.gov.